

Remarks/Arguments

In the December 6, 2005 office action, claims 1-15, 17-19 and 21-22 were rejected under section 102(b) as being anticipated by Barth (US Patent 3,110,147). Claims 1-15, 17-19 and 21-22 also were rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Root (US Patent 3,553,947) in view of Check (US Patent 4,970,852).

Claim 1 is amended to specify at least one retaining structure is integrally molded into the lower panel adjacent the opening, and acts as the primary restraint against movement of the reinforcing rod. Claim 1 is patentable over Barth, or Root and Check. Barth's U-shaped rod 41 is attached to grass catcher 11 by inserting in-turned trunions 44 on the ends of the rod into sockets 56 on tie rods 51, and by inserting bolts 47 through holes 70 in the intermediate portion 42 of the rod. Barth uses these two different retaining structures to restrain movement of U-shaped rod 41, both of which are separate from, not integral with, the lower panel. Neither the tie rods nor the bolts are integrally molded into the lower panel adjacent the opening of grass catcher 11, and neither acts as the primary restraint against movement of the reinforcing rod. Root's cross bar 17 is attached to screen structure 20 using fastening devices or rings 21 spaced along the rods. Root's fastening devices or rings are not integrally molded into the screen structure. Check fails to show a reinforcing rod held by a retaining structure integrally molded into the lower panel of a grass catcher, but instead shows a pair of "horns" 42 which angle upwardly from frame 12 to support catcher 40.

Claim 2 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1 on which it depends.

Claim 3 is amended to specify at least three retaining structures are integrally molded into the lower panel adjacent the opening patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Barth, Root and Check fail to show at least three retaining structures integrally molded into the lower panel adjacent the opening.

Claim 4 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show a retaining structure that is a channel.

Claim 5 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show a retaining structure that is a passage.

Claim 6 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show a retaining structure that is an offset structure.

Claim 7 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show at least some of a reinforcing rod is at least partially exposed facing upwardly.

Claim 8 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 9 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show at least one access hole in a side panel through which the reinforcing rod is inserted.

Claim 10 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 11 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show internal dimensions of the at least one retaining structure that are not larger than the outer cross sectional dimension of a reinforcing rod.

Claim 12 is amended to specify at least one plastic retaining structure integrally molded into the box-shaped molded plastic grass catcher through which the reinforcing rod may be press fitted; the plastic retaining structure acting as the primary restraint against movement of the reinforcing rod. Claim 12 is patentable over Barth, or Root and Check. Barth's U-shaped rod 41 is attached to grass catcher 11 by inserting in-turned trunions 44 on the ends of the rod into sockets 56 on tie rods 51, and by inserting bolts 47 through holes 70 in the intermediate portion 42 of the rod. Barth uses these two different retaining structures to restrain movement of U-shaped rod 41, both of which are separate from, and not integral with, the grass catcher 11 itself. Neither the tie rods nor the bolts are integrally molded into the lower panel adjacent the opening of grass catcher 11, and neither acts as the primary restraint against movement of the reinforcing rod. Root's cross bar 17 is attached to screen structure 20 using fastening devices or rings 21 spaced along the rods. Root's fastening devices or rings are not integrally molded into the screen structure. Check fails to show a reinforcing rod held by a retaining structure integrally molded into the lower panel of a grass catcher, but instead shows a pair of "horns" 42 which angle upwardly from frame 12 to support catcher 40.

Claims 13-15 are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 12.

Claim 17 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 12.

Additionally, the cited references fail to show a reinforcing rod having a length less than the span between the pair of opposing side panels.

Claim 18 is amended to specify retaining structures integrally molded into the lower lip. Claim 18 is patentable over Barth, or Root and Check. Barth's U-shaped rod 41 is attached to grass catcher 11 by inserting in-turned trunions 44 on the ends of the rod into sockets 56 on tie rods 51, and by inserting bolts 47 through holes 70 in the intermediate portion 42 of the rod. Barth uses retaining structures that are separate from, and not integral with, the grass catcher 11 itself. Neither the tie rods nor the bolts are integrally molded into the lower panel adjacent the opening of grass catcher 11, and neither are the only structures gripping rod 41 in place. Root's cross bar 17 is attached to screen structure 20 using fastening devices or rings 21 spaced along the rods. Root's fastening devices or rings are not integrally molded into the screen structure. Check fails to show a reinforcing rod held by a retaining structure integrally molded into the lower panel of a grass catcher, but instead shows a pair of "horns" 42 which angle upwardly from frame 12 to support catcher 40.

Claim 19 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 18.

Additionally, the cited references fail to show each of the integral retaining structures having substantially the same thickness as the walls.

Claim 21 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 18.


Claim 22 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 18.

Additionally, the cited references fail to show integral retaining structures that have an internal dimension, and a reinforcing rod having an outer cross sectional dimension no smaller than the internal dimension of the integral retaining structures.

In conclusion, it is believed that claims 1-15, 17-19, and 21-22 are in condition for allowance, and such allowance is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully,



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